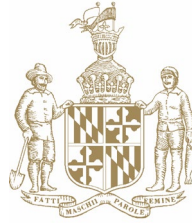


Jazz Lewis
Legislative District 24
Prince George's County

Majority Whip

Appropriations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 151
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3691 · 301-858-3691
800-492-7122 Ext. 3691
Fax: 410-841-3055 · 301-858-3055
Jazz.Lewis@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Oral Testimony of Delegate Jazz Lewis
HB12–Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act
Before the Environment and Transportation Committee

To Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and members of the of the Environment and Transportation Committee:

Today I am here to present testimony in strong support of House Bill 12, the Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) Enhancement Act. This bill will advance growth and development in areas around our state's transit hubs so that we can better leverage our mass transit assets. This Transit-oriented development will ensure that we better connect Marylanders to more communities and opportunities.

HB12 will help the state to best utilize its resources and current transportation assets. By supporting transit-oriented development, we can ensure that having a car is not the only way to commute in Maryland and that our mass-transit hubs are integrated into the communities in which they are placed and not just isolated stations that are difficult to access.

In 2008, Maryland created the Transit Oriented Development designation process. However, since then we have failed to provide the meaningful incentives required to fully fund and realize TOD across Maryland. Without further action, Maryland will miss opportunities and fall far short of its transit goals and many Marylanders will be left behind as a result.

To help build a more connected Maryland, HB12 creates a TOD Capital Grant and Revolving Loan, which will be administered by the Department of Transportation yearly, to promote the equitable development of TODs throughout the state. The fund will provide financial assistance to local jurisdictions for design, planning, construction, or gap funding for public or private development within a state-designated TOD site. This money will allow jurisdictions to sponsor development that will boost our mass transit hubs and better connect Marylanders.

Our state has a long history of investing in mass transit, and putting funding towards our transit system, which is why we have the sixth-highest share of transit commuters across the country, with the Washington DC region being the highest. Though our transit numbers took a hard hit through the COVID-19 pandemic, mass transit continues to be essential to so many Marylanders and communities around the state. And we continue to see riders returning to transit as we emerge from the pandemic, and this bill will help the state create a more transit-oriented and healthier state. Investing in our mass-transit infrastructure makes sense

economically, and environmentally, leveraging the state's dollars to their fullest potential and ensuring that Marylanders have the means to get where they need to go.

This bill is a reintroduction from last year, where it passed out of the Senate unanimously. We continue to work with advocates, our Senate sponsor, and DLS on amendments to this bill to ensure this bill is truly equitable and statewide in scope, we will provide these amendments once we have them back from the amendment office.

Transit-oriented development is our state's best chance to offer more commuting options and achieve our goals to address the climate crisis. By focusing development where it already exists and close to mass-transit options our state can be more environmentally healthy, and better connected.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report.